

# The Daily Gazetteer.

FRIDAY, APRIL 1. 1737.

Nov. 553

No 551.

Account of a Roman Pavement, and some other remarkable Particulars, lately discovered in an open Field belonging to a little Village near Oundle in the County of Northampton.



ABOUT the Beginning of July, 1736, a Servant to one Mr. Campion, a Gentleman Farmer living at a little Village called Coddstock in the County of Northampton, at the Distance of about a Mile from Oundle, a Market-Town in the said County, being at Plow in an open Field be-

longing to the said Village, and at the Edge of that Field adjoining to Glapthorn Field on a Headland, he accidentally called the Guild Acre, discovered in a furrow (the Ground colthing up, as the Plowmen call it) several little Stones which made a very common Appearance, and with which having acquainted his Master, he with an Intimate Neighbour went privately to the Place, and caused so much of the Earth to be cleared from it, as to give a View of a small Part of a very elegant Piece of Work, to which they were unable to assign any Name. This remained not long a Secret, as they were told; for a certain Gentleman or two, who lived a little Distance from the Place, and were great Lovers of Antiquity, having by some Accident heard of this remarkable Discovery, came and had the Work uncovered and swept clean, when there appeared a surprisingly beautiful Roman Pavement, four square, and very little defaced by Time. The Verge or Margin of the Work was 7 Foot wide each Side, and consisted of Red, light Blue, and white Stones, all of them about an Inch and quarter

The Work within the Margin was 10 Foot square, and consisted of lesser Stones and Bricks, about the Bigness of Dice, or 6 Tenths of an Inch square, of 3 different Colours, (viz) White, Blue, and Red, and set in various and most beautiful Patterns, as Chain-Work, Maze-Work, &c. in the midst whereof were placed, in a circular Order, the Figures of 4 Hearts beautifully wrought, and pointing with their Vertices towards the Center.

The White and Red Stones were found, upon Examination, to be made of a different Kind of Clay: the Blue was a hard Stone or Slat that had been dug out of a Quarry. They appeared all of them a little polished, and seem to have been all cut by some Instrument into that unpolished Form we now behold.

This remarkable Piece of Antiquity remained whole and entire but a very little Time after its Discovery; for the People of the Country having heard of it, came to the Place in great Numbers, and for want of sufficient Care and Watchfulness in the manner of the Ground, so defaced it, as to deprive us of a great Measure, of the elegant Satisfaction of beholding the most beautiful and perfect Piece of the Kind that, perhaps, remains undiscovered in our Kingdom.

Most People imagine this extraordinary Work to have been the Pavement of a Tent belonging to some General, and think that there hath formerly been some remarkable Battle fought near the Place.

On Monday the 27th of September, 1736, some curious Workmen were employed by a certain Person of great Distinction (with the Leave of the Lord of the Manor) to take up about a Yard square of this admirable Work, that a Specimen of it might be preserved, in the remaining Part, which is very imperfect, I am told, but a shallow Covering of Earth over it, may be destroyed.

In order to this Undertaking (which was pretty well, by reason the Cement, which once held the Work together, was decay'd, and of little Use to keep it in its proper Order) they thought it expedient to dig a pretty wide and deep Hole through a Part of the Pavement, where we observed the Work to be not like the natural Soil thereabouts, but in a Kind of Clay, but to be a made Ground to the Depth of near two Foot, one Half whereof consisted of a very light, loose Earth, the other of Sand, and Brick Dust, mingled together.

In the Stratum of light Earth which lay next to the Pavement, we discovered several Pieces of Urns, in which the Romans did formerly bury the Bones and Ashes of their Dead, 3 or 4 Oyster Shells, and as many Nails of the larger Size, one of which was observed to be very little destroyed by Rust.

We saw nothing in the Bed of Sand, &c. which lay next to the natural Clay that was worth our Notice, unless some small Chalk Stones, which lay in a right Line, and seem'd to have been placed designedly in that Order.

But that which did most of all excite the Curiosity of the Beholders, was a thin Bed of Ashes lying betwixt the light Earth and the Gravel, upon a thin and whitish Crust of Earth more compact than the rest, and not so easily to be crumbled to Pieces; in and by the Side of these Ashes were found the Tip of a Horn, the Jaw Bone and other Bones of a Beast, which we knew nothing of.

It would have been a singular Pleasure to have seen the utmost Extent of these Curiosities, but this the Owner of the Land would by no means agree to, lest the remaining Part of the Pavement should be destroyed, which he intended (so far as it was in his Power) to preserve, that it might give the same agreeable Surprise, as it hath so lately done, by a second Discovery, to some remote Generation.

Most Persons, who had either seen or heard of these Things, were very ready to give their Opinions about them. Some think the light Earth, Bones, Ashes and Pieces of Urns, to be a certain Indication of a Burying-place, and that the Body of some noted Heathen had been burned and interred here.

The Bones of the Beast lying in and by the Side of the Ashes, are indeed no Exception to this Supposition; for with the Pagans it was a Custom, especially if the Person deceased was an Emperor, or Renowned General, to bury the Body with Company; for, because they fancied that the Ghosts delighted in Blood, they therefore killed Beasts and threw them on the Pile.

*Multa Bona circa mastrantur corpore mortis  
Setigeraq; Sues, raptoq; ex omnibus agris  
In flammam jugulant pecudes.* VIR. ÆN. 12.

But as no Human Bones have been discovered either in or near the aforesaid Ashes, there is not Evidence sufficient to support this Opinion, and all that can be inferred from the above-mentioned Circumstances is, that some Sacrifice hath been here offered to some Heathen Deity.

After having made these Observations, I proceeded in the next Place to examine the Surface of the adjoining plow'd Lands, whereon small Stones and Pieces of Tile lay so thick, as to change the Colour of the natural Soil, not only by the Sides of the Pavement, but a great Way over the Field, especially on the East Side of the Pavement, where I had not walked above 20 Yards, when I took up a Fragment of a Roman Urn, which I was told was not the only Thing of that Sort that had been found there; and that Mr. Campion a little further Eastward, took out of the Lands a very large, square Freestone, which he converted into a Watering Trough for Cattle, and that several Stones, like Foundation Stones, had been plowed up, which could never naturally have belonged to that Kind of Ground; from which Circumstances, I did conclude, that some very remarkable Buildings had been formerly erected here, and that the particular Edifice, which the Pavement did formerly adorn, was most probably an *Ædes Sacra*, or Holy House, wherein Sacrifices, Prayers, and other Religious Exercises had been performed by the Heathens.

The Edifice adjoining to this Holy Place was most probably a large and magnificent Dwelling-House, and the Wood at some little Distance, commonly known by the Name of the *Hall Wood*, might have taken its Name from it; tho' neither History nor Tradition, make mention of any Thing of this Nature.

I examined that Part of the Field that lies next to the Wood, and could neither see nor hear of the Ruins of any Edifice nearer to the Wood, from whence it might more properly take its Denomination.

That the Edifice whose Ruins do so plainly appear, was some famous Dwelling-House, I am still more inclined to believe, when I consider the Pleasantness and Commodiousness of the Place where it appears to have been erected, which is a rising Ground, from whence Eastward, there is a fine open Prospect over a large River, of several ancient Villages. Towards the South, there is a View of some Part of the North Side of Oundle, whose stately Spire doth greatly over-top every Thing else, and though of a more modern Date than any Thing we have been taking Notice of, yet is deservedly to be admired for its Height, Strength and Beauty.

If from hence we turn our Eyes Northward to the Brow of the Hill, we are presented with the Prospect of a pleasant Wood, standing most commodiously to defend the ancient Inhabitants from the cold Winds in the Winter, as well as to refresh them by its cooling and pleasant Shade in the Summer Season.

At the Bottom of the Hill Southward, and at the Distance of about 12 or 13 Furlongs, there is a green Pasture, through which runs a little Brook, which was not, I presume, of much Service to the Inhabitants, who might much more easily be supplied with Water, on all Occasions, from a Spring that rises within the Distance of about 100 Yards, a little above the Place where the supposed Fabrick stood.

There have been, I am told, 5 or 6 Roman Medals, found amongst the Rubbish that was thrown from off the Pavement at its first Discovery; with much Difficulty I got the Sight of 3 of them, they were of Brass, and all seemed to bear the same Image, the Superscription upon one of them was not legible, but the other two might be pretty easily made out on both Sides; on the right Sides of them, both were these following Letters and Name, (viz.)

D. N. VALENTINIANUS P. F. AUG. i. e.  
*Dominus Noster Valentinianus Pius Felix Augustus.*

On their contrary Sides were these different Images and Motto's. On the one was the Image of Victory stepping from the left to the right Hand, and in her right Hand holding a Coronet of Laurel, and a Palm Branch in her left.

On the Reverse of the other, was to be seen the Figure of an Emperor in an erect Posture, leaning with his right Hand on the Head of a Captive kneeling upon a Knee, with his Hands tied behind him. His left Hand was supported by a Staff with a Crucifix on the Top of it, denoting him to be a Christian, as this Emperor was known to be. Both these Medals were struck at different Places, one at Constantinople, and the other at Siscia, as appears by the Letters at the Bottom of them.

This Emperor bears a good Character in History. He began his Reign in the Year of our Lord 364, and was a great Benefactor to this Nation, which was at that Time a Part of the Roman Empire, in putting a Stop to the Incursions of its barbarous Enemies, the Picts, the Saxons, the Scots, and the Attacotti, against whom he dispatched the active and hardy General Theodosius, and relieved the Island from the great Distress it was in, and laid the Foundation of a lasting Peace.

The Pieces of Coin I have been speaking of, can hardly be supposed to have been laid designedly in the Rubbish, amongst which they were found, but most probably were a Part of some Money that had been hoarded up, and were scattered in the separate Manner they were found when the Edifice was destroyed, which very probably was done in or about the Time of the Emperor, whose Image they bear, when very many of the Heathens became converted to Christianity, and an almost general Dislike had obtained, not only of their idolatrous Rites and Ceremonies, but of the Places too in which they were exercised. Hence therefore we may conclude, with great Probability, that the curious Mosaic Work I have been giving an Account of, is of a very ancient Standing, and was in Being near 1400 Years ago, i. e. at the Time when Valentinian the First was Emperor, but how much earlier, as there is no Room for Conjecture, I shall not presume to determine, but leave every one to judge as he pleases. Whether this Work did belong to any particular Part of an *Ædes Sacra*, more holy than the rest, answering to the





Choirs or Chancels, or was the Pavement of a Holy Place not larger than its own Dimensions, will be best known by tracing the Foundation: But whatever Uncertainty we are under as yet as to this Particular, we may be assured that this Place of *Heavenly* Worship was no mean Place, if we may judge of the Whole from that beautiful Part we have lately had the Pleasure of beholding, but was more magnificent and more finely adorned than very many of our Christian Churches, tho' the Object we adore is not any inferior Creature, but the Great CREATOR of all Things.

Yesterday his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales went and heard the Debates in the House of Peers. Last Week was seized and brought to the Custom-house 181 Half Anchors of Brandy, and 2000 Weight of Tea.

Last Friday Samuel Young, Esq; a Gentleman of an Estate in the County of Bucks, was married at Cheneys in the said County, to Miss Watson, second Daughter of George Watson, Esq;

The Rev. Dr. Rye is to succeed to the Canonry in the Cathedral Church of Christ Church, vacant by the Death of the Rev. Dr. Terry.

Yesterday se'night the Rev. Lawson Huddleston, M. A. Rector of St. Cuthbert in the City of Wells, was inducted into the Rectory of Holford in the County of Somerset, and Diocese of Bath and Wells.

Next Week the Right Hon. the Lord Viscount Shannon, General of his Majesty's Horse, will set out for Ireland, in order to take upon him the Command of his Majesty's Forces in that Kingdom, in the room of General Wynne, deceased.

Last Sunday died in an advanced Age, at his House at Shefford in the County of Bedford, Thomas Peter, Esq; a Gentleman in the Commission of the Peace for the said County, and dying without Issue, has left his Estate, both Real and Personal, to his Nephew Mr. Peters of Bedford.

Yesterday his Grace the Duke of Grafton, and the Right Hon. the Earl of Grantham, were at Hampton Court, in order to give the proper Directions for that Palace being fitted up for the Reception of the Royal Family for the ensuing Summer Season.

Last Sunday died in an advanced Age, at his House in Grosvenor's Street, William Blind, Esq; a Gentleman possessed of an Estate in the County of Suffolk.

The Lady of the Right Hon. Sir Robert Walpole is very ill at his House in St. James's Park.

To-morrow the Justices of the Peace for the City and Liberty of Westminster, meet at Westminster Hall, pursuant to their last Adjournment.

Yesterday came Advice to Town, that Sir Edmund Isham, Bart. was elected for the County of Northampton, in the room of his Brother, Sir Justinian Isham, deceased.

The same Day Mr. Henry Hart, Vestry Clerk to St. Margaret's, Westminster, Clerk to the Burgesses Court, and also to the Commissioners of the Land Tax, was married to Miss Fisher, Daughter of Mr. Fisher, an eminent Oilman in the Bowling-Alley, Westminster, with whom he had a considerable Fortune.

Yesterday Morning Thomas Farnaby, Esq; only Son and Heir of Sir Charles Farnaby, was married to Miss Lloyd, a beautiful young Lady, with a Fortune of 100,000 l.

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143 to 1-half India 177 1-2 1-half South Sea  
99 9-10 1-half to 98 Old Annuity 107 106 107  
to 1-half New Ditto 106 1-half 105 1-half 106  
1-4th. Three per Cent. 103 102 103. Empe-  
ror's Loan 116 1-half to 3-4ths Royal Assu-  
rance 109 1-half London Assurance 15 African  
14 India Bonds 61 102 51 Prem. Three per  
Cent. ditto 61 102 51 Prem. South Sea ditto 21  
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will be published,  
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gedy, as it is now Acting at the New Theatre in the  
Hay-Market. By Mr. Lillo.  
Printed for John Gray, at the Cross-Keys in the Poultry,  
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2. The Christian Hero: A Tragedy. The 2d Edition.  
Both by the same Author.  
3. An Account of the Life and Character of Scanderbeg;  
inferred to the Readers of the Christian Hero.

This Day is Published,  
Being a Continuation of the Present State of the Republic  
of Letters, and the Literary Magazine.

**THE History of the Works of the**  
Learned, giving a general View of the State of Learning  
throughout Europe, and containing an Impartial Account  
and accurate Abstracts of the most valuable Books published  
in Great Britain and Foreign Parts; interspersed with Differ-  
tations on several curious and entertaining Subjects, critical  
Reflections, and Memoirs of the most eminent Writers in all  
Branches of Polite Literature.

For the Month of MARCH, 1737.

This Number contains the following Articles:  
I. An Account of that valuable Treatise lately published,  
*De Laudibus Legum Angliæ*. Written by Sir John Forcelyne  
Lord Chief Justice, and after Lord Chancellor to K. Henry VI.  
Including several Reflections of the Learned Editor, on the  
imperflections of the English Law; and likewise Memoirs of  
the illustrious Author and his Family.

II. Propositions of Natural and Revealed Religion, con-  
cerning the Being of a God, his Providence, the Extent of our  
Understanding, with respect to the Material and Spiritual  
Part of the Creation, and the Infinite Spirit, the Divine In-  
spiration of the Scriptures, and the Doctrine of the Trinity.

III. A large and copious Abstract of the third Volume of  
the History of China, relating to the Learning and Religion  
of that Empire.

IV. Philalethes Cantabrigiænsis's Reply to Dr. Pemberton's  
Observations published last Month.

V. A Catalogue of Books published this Month.  
Printed for T. Cooper at the Globe in Pater-noster-Row, and  
sold by J. and J. Fox in Westminster-Hall, and J. Jackson near  
St. James's Gate.

BO O K S printed for J. WALTHOE,  
over-against the Royal Exchange in  
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Plead with the Passage, we slide swiftly on;  
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N. B. This is the Book recommended by Sir Richard  
Steele, in *The Guardian*, No. 150. and from which the Ad-  
venture inserted in that Paper is transcribed.

II. **THE SPECULATIVIST.** A Collection of Letters and Essays  
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How Church-yard, Nov. 3. 1736.

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